



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **\$1.5M Gift to Boston Area Skatepark from Vans**

***Charles River Conservancy, DCR and Vans emphasize benefits for the community***

CAMBRIDGE - The Charles River Conservancy (CRC) announced today that they have received an initial \$1.5M commitment from Vans towards the 40,000 square foot Lynch Family Skatepark. Vans will also provide \$25,000 each year for seven years to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) for ongoing maintenance of the skatepark, which will be located under the ramps of the Leonard P. Zakim Memorial Bridge in North Point Park.

For more than a decade, CRC has worked with DCR and supporters toward the creation of an urban skatepark that will cater to athletes of all levels, including skateboarders, BMX riders, in-line skaters, scooter riders and athletes in wheelchairs, while also serving as a venue for professional skating events.

"Vans is honored to join the Charles River Conservancy, the Lynch Foundation, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and all of the amazing partners, community members and skaters who banded together to bring the Lynch Family Skatepark project to light. We are really proud to be a part of this historical project and to bring a world-class skate park to Massachusetts, the original home of our founders, the Van Doren family," said Vans President Kevin Bailey. "We look forward to celebrating the park opening alongside the whole community."

In addition to the skate park, North Point Park offers two playgrounds, an open lawn and waterfront enjoyment. Vans also plans to hold two large-scale, professional skating events at the park each year.

"Vans has stepped up to become a key private partner for this very civic project. We could not move forward without their generous contribution and partnership," said Renata von Tschanner, founder of the Charles River Conservancy and the skatepark's leading pioneer. "The effort to build such a monumental facility in the Boston area has overcome many hurdles, but more importantly, was met with support from those who care about the future of the Boston area as a center for creativity and innovation."

The land on which the skatepark is being developed is a former brownfield. CRC worked diligently to navigate the process of converting the land for public use, revitalizing a once unusable area. Once constructed, the skatepark will be managed, maintained and operated by DCR as a designated state park. It will be free and open to everyone.

"The skatepark project is an innovative use of public space. Instead of being an idle area, it will play a significant role in the ongoing rejuvenation of the parklands along the Charles River close to Boston's North Station," said DCR Commissioner Jack Murray. "The public --private partnership that brought this project to fruition will continue to provide recreational opportunities and a world-class wheel- friendly destination for Greater Boston's skateboard community."

CRC has raised over \$3 million for the skatepark prior to the commitment from Vans. Other generous contributors to the skatepark include the Lynch Foundation, for which the park will be named, as well as the City of Cambridge, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority. A seed grant of \$5,000 from the foundation of famed skateboarder Tony Hawk helped to get the fundraising going in 2003. The project has also received support from more than 400 skaters and their parents who helped design the park and gave whatever they could to support its development--some giving \$5 and some giving \$5,000.

"We supported the Conservancy for this skatepark because Boston's youth need a place to practice and showcase their athletic skills," said Carolyn Lynch of the Lynch Foundation. "We applaud the Conservancy for working with the State in this public - private endeavor on this challenging site."

The idea for an urban skatepark in the Boston area came to both von Tscharnier and sculptor Nancy Schön, creator of Copley Square's famous Tortoise and Hare sculptures, before their paths crossed. Schon had the idea after learning that skateboarders were using her sculptures to practice. After speaking with the skaters about the damage they were doing to the sculptures, she realized these athletes had few options for places to skate in Greater Boston.

Von Tscharnier had envisioned a park under the Zakim Bridge along the Charles River while teaching at Harvard's Radcliffe Landscape Seminars. In 2000, she formed the Charles River Conservancy to promote the stewardship, renewal, and enhancement of the urban parklands along the Charles River, and the creation of the skate park became one of its signature projects.

"My conversations with skateboarders were enlightening," said Schön, a CRC advisory board member who has been central to the skatepark effort since joining forces with von Tscharnier. "I realized that these skateboarders were not kids who wanted to cause trouble, but athletes with few places to practice. This skatepark sends an important message to young people that the Boston area embraces the creativity, innovation and risk that so many of them embody. These attributes are critical to being an urban area on the cutting edge."

The Lynch Family Skatepark is designed by the engineering, architecture and design firm Stantec and landscape architecture firm Halvorson Design Partnership, Inc.. Mike McIntyre, of Stantec's Action Sport, group played an instrumental role in designing the park. McIntyre is a former professional skateboarder who has built more than 150 skate parks around the country and overseas.

A groundbreaking celebration is scheduled for fall. A great place to watch construction is the adjacent North Bank Bridge that connects North Point Park and Charlestown.

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### **About Vans**

Vans®, a VF Corporation (NYSE: VFC) brand, is the original action sports footwear and apparel brand. Vans collections include authentic footwear, apparel, accessories and snowboard boots that are sold globally in more than 170 countries through a network of subsidiaries, distributors and international offices. VF Outdoor, Inc. owns and operates more than 415 stores of the Vansbrand in the United States and internationally, each offering a range of Vans footwear and apparel while communicating the brand's rich heritage. The Vans brand promotes the action sports lifestyle, youth culture and creative self-expression through the support of musicians, artists and athletes on boards and bikes all over the globe and through progressive events such as the Vans Triple Crown of Surfing®, the Vans Downtown Showdown, the Vans Pool Party, the Vans Warped Tour® and surfing's most prestigious contest, the Vans US Open of Surfing. Vans, "Off the Wall" Since '66 [www.vans.com](http://www.vans.com) [facebook.com/vans](https://facebook.com/vans) [twitter.com/vans\\_66](https://twitter.com/vans_66)

### **About the Department of Conservation and Recreation**

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Jack P. Murray, the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr).

### **About the Charles River Conservancy**

Founded in 2000, The Conservancy has over 25,000 supporters and volunteers. The Conservancy's programs include returning swimming to the River, employing 2,000 landscape volunteers annually, improving the river paths, illuminating bridges, and offering the Sunday Parkland Games. The Conservancy, with the help of private donors, often partners with DCR and MassDOT to implement civic projects and programs. [www.thecharles.org](http://www.thecharles.org) / [facebook.com/charlesriverconservancy](https://facebook.com/charlesriverconservancy) / [twitter.com/charlesrivercrc](https://twitter.com/charlesrivercrc)

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